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Hostel Territory

Abortion in the Collective Unconscious

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Swiss psychiatrist Carl Jung theorized that there exists a universal human consciousness that holds the collective memories, experiences, and wisdom of the human race.

While some elements of Jung's psychology are new age fluff, he articulated some useful concepts that can help us to better understand art and culture. He proposed that art might express broader themes in a society, that an artist may tap unconscious elements of individuals and mankind through the medium of music, art, and film.

This concept may be helpful to better understand the relationship between films such as the recently released **Hostel** and the nearly 50 million abortion procedures that have taken place since the Supreme Court legalized abortion in 1973.

Hostel is directed by Eli Roth and opened as a "*Quentin Tarantino Presents*" film upon its release in Jan. 2006. Tarantino, a director of his own brand of excessively violent films such as the **Kill Bill** series, acted as a mentor to Roth during the creation of **Hostel**.

Tarantino recently warned people of how horrifying **Hostel** really is, saying, "Be careful about the film, you might end up in a hospital at the end of the night. It's no joke. We've actually had people pass out at screenings and they had to call the paramedics."¹

What is a deeper concern, given the number of young people that will see this movie, is the graphic blending of titillating sexual content and sadistic violence.

The first stage of **Hostel** is basically a porn movie, with three young men on a European sex spree engaging in graphically represented immorality of every kind. The second stage of **Hostel** involves the young men being

imprisoned in a torture chamber where wealthy businessmen pay big bucks to inflict pain upon their captured victims. The scenes of torture, dismemberment and violence perpetrated upon the characters in this film are graphic and shocking.

So Where's the Abortion Connection?

The intelligentsia and the media elite zealously suppress the graphic truth about the nature of abortion and its traumatic aftermath. The effects of the abortion procedure on the unborn, and the trauma unleashed upon all who participate in the death of the unborn, remain largely hidden from public view.

This pain and grief lies buried deeply in the collective unconscious of our culture, where it is forbidden expression.² Like steam rising through fissures in the earth's surface, the truth about abortion searches for ways to be expressed and released. In **Hostel**, as with other films of this genre, we find elements of this suppressed trauma, violence, and pain released through the medium of film.

The generations born since 1973 are "survivors of abortion," many of whom have lost siblings to abortion. The legalization of abortion communicates to them that their own lives were disposable contingent upon the judgment of their parents.

Films such as **Hostel** may connect in some way with their collective unconscious and conscious awareness of the loss of life and the traumatic impact of 33 years of "choice" on their lives and the lives of their parents and families.

Hostel is not the first film of this genre popular among youth. Many of the "slasher/horror" films since 1973 often feature young people and sexual references or situations followed by graphic bloodshed, torture and mayhem.

The fascination of youth with such films may be further explained by looking at three interrelated factors in our society that especially impact our post-Roe youth and make them more vulnerable to both attraction to such movies and negative effects from their viewing:

1. This generation is more vulnerable to the impact of twisted images of sex and torture as "survivors of abortion." They have lost millions of siblings and potential classmates and friends.
2. Unhealed abortion and other trauma (such as divorce) can place severe emotional stress on parents and lead to an absence of strong emotional bonds between parents and children. Such children are

more prone to developing addictions and experiencing relational instability.

3. This generation has been exposed at an early age to constant stimulation and desensitization from a continual stream of television/movies/video/computer chat, often containing graphic violence and sexual content.

Dr. Neil Malamuth, co-author of the book Pornography and Sexual Aggression, studied reactions to excessively violent films that are popular with youth and easily accessible at the local video store. He found that viewers were initially disturbed and depressed by the films. However, with further viewing they became desensitized to the content and eventually, found the material enjoyable.³

In these films, as with pornography, there are addictive elements at work, since each new film must increase its violent shock content to out-do its predecessors. Audiences develop a higher tolerance to the graphic content while craving increasing levels of gore and sickness.

Movies like **Hostel** act as a type of subliminal programming, as viewers may begin to associate sexual arousal with violent images and fantasies. For young men in particular, films such as **Hostel** can lead to a dark cynicism that can dim the light of innocence, trust, and joy at the deepest level of the heart and soul.

A more dangerous outcome is the message that will be internalized by some young men; violence, aggression, and pain are acceptable companions to sexual experiences. This trend does not make our daughters safer on their high school dates or at college parties.

However, the release of this trauma, violence, and pain in this film's context does not lead to a healthy cathartic release and healing. Instead it leads to a further entrenchment of the disconnect between our collective cultural trauma resulting from nearly 50 million abortions, and recovery from these wounds.

In fact, this disconnection will lead to greater self-destructive acting-out of themes related to this and other trauma. As the book Forbidden Grief reveals, the traumatic themes of post abortion pain can lead to emotional illness and relational dysfunction.²

This should fill us with an even greater urgency to end the scourge of abortion in our land. Abortion not only ends the life of a developing child, but also deeply wounds all who participate in this action.

The fallout from abortion over time is like a cancer that seeps into countless marriages, families, and communities. This repressed unhealed toxic trauma finds a type of release in twisted films like **Hostel**, but in a form that celebrates the violence and further corrupts the soul of youth.

The lines have been clearly drawn in this culture in a battle for the heart and soul of our nation. In Jan. 2006, *Hostel* - the end game of the culture of death - held the number one spot at the box office. However, at number two was **The Chronicles of Narnia**, a powerful presentation of C.S. Lewis's timeless Christian allegory of the victory of good over evil.

The battle is raging for the hearts, minds and souls of this generation. We must boldly enter the battle, armed with the weapons of truth and love and filled with faith and hope in the ultimate victory of life over death.

Now more than ever we must work tirelessly to protect the unborn and to heal those wounded by their participation in abortion, confident in the belief that one day, abortion-like slavery will become a shameful relic of our past that we will never allow to rise again.

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Citations

1. www.contactmusic.com
2. See T. Burke, *Forbidden Grief: the Unspoken Pain of Abortion*, (Springfield, IL: Acorn Books, 2002). To order, call 1-888-412-2676
3. "Media's New Mood: Sexual Violence," *Media and Values*, Issue 33, Fall 1985



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